

PRODUCTIONS, TRADE, AND COMMERCE OF THE ORIENTAL NATIONS.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

RELATIVE TO

The productions, trade, and commerce of the oriental nations with which the United States have not made treaties; in compliance with a resolution of the House of Representatives of the 9th instant.

FEBRUARY 17, 1847.

Read, and laid upon the table.

To the House of Representatives of the United States:

The Secretary of State, in compliance with the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 9th instant, on the subject of "any letters or communication received at the Department of State on the present state, productions, trade, and commerce of the oriental nations with which the United States have not made treaties, so far as the same can be done without injury to the public interests," has the honor to transmit the accompanying paper received at this department from Mr Aaron H. Palmer, of New York.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, February 15, 1847.

Letter to the Hon. James Buchanan, Secretary of State, on the present state, productions, trade, and commerce of the oriental nations with which the United States have not made treaties, and recommending that a special mission be sent by the President to open commercial relations therewith; proposing a consular plan and superintendent of American trade in the East, and the appointment of additional consuls and vice consuls in Australia and New Zealand. By Aaron H. Palmer, counsellor of the Supreme Court of the United States, and director of the American and Foreign Agency, New York.

AMERICAN AND FOREIGN AGENCY,
New York, November 28, 1846.

SIR: I beg to acquaint you that I have conducted during the last 15 years an agency in this city, under the above style, restricted to agency and commission transactions, and to making known in foreign countries the superior skill and ability of our mechanics, machinists, and manufacturers in some of the most prominent branches of American industry, particularly in the construction of steam-vessels, engines, and machinery generally; and have, with great labor and at a heavy expense, issued and transmitted throughout the West India islands, Mexico, Central America, all South America, Egypt, Turkey, Greece, Russia, the maritime countries and islands of Asia, Africa, Austral-Asia, and Oceanica, upwards of 140,000 large illustrated circulars relating to such business, in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese, and of which about 14,000 contained a series of lithographed drawings of steamers, with pro forma estimates of the cost of construction of such vessels at this port.

This has been the means of eliciting a great variety of orders for many objects of our industry, including a large order from the Pasha of Egypt, and for several steamers that have been constructed here for foreign account.

With the circulars thus addressed by me to independent Asiatic sovereigns and princes I have generally sent the latest American almanac, maps and statistics of the United States, publications of the "American Institute" of this city, American agricultural, commercial, and scientific periodicals, and files of the latest New York newspapers, with the addition to the Japanese government of the "American Railroad Journal;" printed descriptions and drawings of the "magnetic telegraph," lithographs of some of the new and splendid steamers belonging to this port, samples of cotton and tobacco seeds, &c.; and for the presidents of the "imperial academies" of Yedo and Miako, the constitution and bulletins of the "National Institute," Washington; together with catalogues of books in every department of knowledge, from the principal booksellers of this city.

Since the 24th February, 1842, I have forwarded to Nangasaki 14 separate communications of the character above mentioned, by the favor of my friend Chevalier Gevers, late chargé d'affaires of the Netherlands at Washington, via Batavia, per privileged Dutch ships in the Japanese trade; and through my correspondents in Manilla and China, by the Chinese junks trading regularly between Chapú and Nangasaki, and have received advices that several of those voluminous missives had safely reached their destination, and were favorably received.

This general distribution of those circulars, &c., has led me to an extensive correspondence with many remote countries of the East; and a desire has been manifested on different occasions, by several eastern princes, to open commercial relations and make treaties with the United States.

From such correspondence, and the documents and communications of the "Royal Economical Society of the Philippine Islands," Manilla, of which I have the honor to be corresponding member for the United States, and from the publications of American and foreign missionaries, and the leading journals of India, China, and Australia, which have been regularly sent to me for several years past, I have been enabled to collect a mass of valuable geographical and commercial statistics, and much important information, relative to the movements and progress of civilization, trade, and commerce in the eastern hemisphere, which I am now desirous of placing at the disposal of our government, and render profitably available to the commerce, navigation, and industry of the country, by a special mission to the East.

Among the countries of the East to which my missives have been sent are the Comoro islands, Abyssinia, Persia, Burmah, Cochin-China, the Indian Archipelago, and Japan. I now propose to offer some brief authentic information and details respecting the present state, productions, and commerce of each, and likewise of Corea, showing the importance and expediency of a special mission being sent by the government of the United States to open and extend our commercial relations with those countries. A proposed consular plan for the same, excepting Japan and Corea, is also herewith respectfully submitted. I beg to commend the whole to your favorable consideration, in the hope that you will promote the early and efficient action of our government in regard to such a mission.

COMORO ISLANDS.

The principal islands are Comoro, Johanna, Mayotta, and Mohilla, lying in the Mozambique channel, of great fertility, inhabited by a friendly and hospitable race of Arabs, carrying on considerable traffic, in vessels of 70 to 200 tons burden, with Madagascar, the east coast of Africa, and Arabia; are much frequented by English and American vessels for trade, and by our whalers for refreshments. The principal products of those countries procured in that traffic are ebony, various dye woods, orchilla weed, drugs and gums, indigo, coffee, dates, pepper, spices, tobacco, hides, horns, gold, amber, ambergris, cowries, ivory, elephant and hippopotamus teeth, tortoise-shell, wax, ostrich feathers, &c., in exchange for cotton and linen goods, woollen cloths, glassware, ironmongery, lead, tin, small looking-glasses, beads, trinkets, gunpowder, muskets, pistols, &c.

In 1838 I submitted to my late friend, Hon. John Forsyth, then Secretary of State, the translation of a letter, in Arabic, I had then recently received from the Sultan of those islands, in which he expressed a desire to make a treaty with the United States, as he had done with the English. Mr. Forsyth promised to lay the letter before the President, but I am not aware that any action was ever had thereon by our government. The Sultan is since dead, and his son, Abdallah, residing at Johanna, has succeeded to the government of those islands. The natives style themselves the Henzoanee tribes.

Early in 1844 the French took possession of the island of Mayotta, where they have formed a trading establishment; and, on the 16th of November, in the same year, they concluded a treaty with Seid Seyeed, Imaun of Muscat, at Zanzibar, by which the manufactures and products of France, imported in French vessels into his dominions in Arabia, Africa, and the Persian gulf, are to pay a duty of only 5 per cent., and are exempt from all other charges of import, export, exchange, and pilot dues.

In the month of January last the French government sent an expedition with the special object of visiting the various ports in the dominions of the Imaun, to ascertain their resources and capabilities for trade, and the introduction of French products and manufactures.

An expedition under the direction of an English gentleman of experience and enterprise is now in progress, in a small iron steamer drawing only $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet water, for the survey and exploration of the rivers on the east coast of Africa, especially the Joob on the north, and the Zambesi on the south; the latter supposed to be the outlet of a large lake in the interior of Africa.

A late number of the Transactions of the Royal Geographical Society, London, contains some valuable information respecting this section of Africa, the great lake called N'Yassi, and the natives occupying the country around it. This lake—a sea, as it is called by the natives—is some five or six hundred miles from the eastern coast; its breadth in some places is about fifteen miles, while in others the opposite shore cannot be seen; its length is unknown, neither extremity having been traced; it probably exceeds five hundred miles, according to the best authority. Numerous islands, filled with a large population, are scattered among its waters. It is navigated by bark canoes, twenty feet long, capable of carrying twenty persons. Its waters are fresh, and it abounds in fish. The people seem more advanced in civilization than any African nation south of the equator, of which we have knowledge; they are compared, in point of civilization, to the Mexicans and Peruvians at the time of the conquest. The nation called the Monomocsi, or Mucaranga, north of the lake, as well as the Movisa, on its opposite shores, are a tall and handsome race, with a brown complexion; they are distinguished for their industry, and retain the commercial habits for which they were noted two centuries and a half ago, when their existence was first known to the Portuguese. They descend annually to Zanzibar in large numbers. The journey to the coast and back again takes nine or ten months, including the delay of awaiting the proper season for returning. They are clothed in cotton of their own manufacture, and transport their merchandise to the coast on asses of a fine breed.

In this connexion it may not be deemed irrelevant to state that I have addressed, on various occasions, a number of my circulars and communications to Ranavalo Manjaka, queen of Madagascar, at Tananarivo, and to her governors at the ports of Tamative, Bembatouka, Foule Ponte, and Majunga, of that island, which is extremely fertile, and has a population of upwards of four millions. An active trade has until recently been carried on with its principal ports, by English and French trading vessels, from Mauritius and Bourbon; but owing to the persecution of the native Christians, and expulsion of the missionaries by the queen, and her arbitrary regulations respecting trade and intercourse with Europeans, that trade has entirely ceased.

The French have taken possession of the islands of Nossi-Bé, Nossi-Cumba, Nossi-Metsion, and Nossi-Fali, on the northwest coast of Madagascar: they are well wooded and watered, and possess good harbors.

Bembatouka bay, on the west coast, is large and safe; the entrance is three miles wide. On the east side of the entrance is the village of Majunga. Bembatouka town is on the south side of a point of the same name, about three leagues within the bay, on the east side. It is much frequented by our vessels for trade. Hides and fresh and salt beef are among the principal articles of export. An American merchant has been established there several years. It has a regular communication with Tananarivo by couriers, who perform the journey in about eight days.

Within the last four years the French government has sent several expeditions for the exploration and survey of the coast and harbors of Madagascar; and a memoir, embracing all the latest discoveries in the geography, ethnography, population, and present condition of the island, illustrated by a map, was published under the direction of the Minister of the Marine, in July, 1845.

ABYSSINIA.

In 1841 I forwarded, care of the late Bogos Bey, Cairo, a series of my circulars, &c., to Ubi, King of Tigré, at Adowah, Abyssinia, bordering on the Red sea. American manufactures have been for some time past introduced into that country by our trading vessels at Masuah, where the caravans arrive from the interior in February, and at other ports on the Abyssian coast of the Red sea, and the ports of Tajourah, Leila, and Berberah, of the Somaule Arab tribes, on the gulf of Aden. Berberah is remarkable for having been a mart for the exchange of African and Asiatic produce between the merchants of either continent from the earliest ages.

The English and French have of late years turned their attention to the opening of commercial intercourse with Abyssinia. In 1841 a special embassy was sent for that purpose, by the East India Company, to Ankober, about 370 miles from Tajourah, which succeeded in making a favorable commercial treaty with Sehalee Selassee, King of Shoa, one of the southern provinces. In 1842 Monsieur Goutin, French consular agent at Masuah, visited Gondar, to secure certain privileges in behalf of French commerce in the ports of the kingdom. The same year Monsieur Rochet d'Hericourt was sent by the French government on a special mission to Shoa for the like object. He has recently forwarded to the Minister of Commerce 17 bags of seeds of several varieties of vegetables, cereals, cotton plants, &c., collected by him during a scientific tour through that country.

Among the products of Abyssinia are gold, gold dust, ivory, civet, ostrich feathers, peltries, hides, rhinoceros horns, wax, precious gums, spices, drugs, and coffee of choicest quality; much of the best coffee shipped from Mocha being the product of Abyssinia. There is a pearl fishery at the island of Dhalac, near Masuah. The imports are chiefly salt, cotton goods, pewter, zinc, copper and brass wire, beads, small mirrors, cutlery, trinkets, tobacco, snuff, &c. A late scientific English traveller in that country states that the Gondar cotton, indigenous to the elevated regions of Ethiopia, is of a fine, long, silky staple, of a quality equal, if not superior to the American Sea island.

Accurate information respecting the present state, productions, and commerce of Abyssinia could readily be procured by the proposed mission at Masuah and Tajourah, and official communications be addressed thence, accompanied with some suitable presents to the kings of Tigré and Shoa, requesting that our countrymen be permitted to trade in their dominions upon the same footing with the English, or other most favored nations. The Amharic, a dialect of the Arabic, is the principal language of Abyssinia. The Arabic is more generally spoken by the traders on the coast. The population of Abyssinia is estimated at 4,500,000.

Caravan trade at Berberah.—A great annual fair is held at Berberah between September and March, when large caravans from the interior and unexplored regions of Africa come to exchange their various and rich products for the manufactures and products both of eastern and western nations. American cotton goods are the principal articles given in exchange to the natives by the Indian Banians of Aden, Bombay, Surat, and Cutch, who monopolize the trade at the fair. They are enabled to purchase those goods from American traders at Mocha, Masuah, and other ports on the Red sea, cheaper than the English, which are almost entirely excluded from that market.* The annual trade in coffee only, at Berberah, is estimated at upwards of 15,000 tons.

The French have recently purchased settlements at Eid and Amphiba, two eligible ports on the Abyssinian coast, as marts for their trade with the interior of that country.

ADEN.

Aden, on the south coast of Yemen, in Arabia, is now a dependency of Bombay, and depot and halting station for the bi-monthly line of steamers between Suez and that port. From its advantageous position and the excellency of its ports, it is destined to become the rival of Mocha, and the great mart for the products of the Arabian and Persian gulfs and the south-east coast of Africa, &c. The principal merchants are Banians, and the trade with those countries is mostly carried on in Arab vessels.

Sana, the capital of Yemen, and residence of the Imaun, is about twelve days journey from Aden, and nearly the same distance from Mocha. The government of this district of Arabia, under an Imaun, has existed upwards of 200 years. The town is situated in a fertile valley, about 400 feet above the sea, and has a population of about 40,000. The Imaun has two large palaces, built of hewn stone, with extensive gardens adjoining. The houses are large, and the windows of those of the higher classes are of stained glass. The streets are larger and cleaner than those of Arabian towns generally. The merchants form the principal body of men in the town, are generally wealthy, and live in good style. The Banians are numerous. The principal trade is in coffee; the nearest place where it is grown is Haffash, about a short day's journey southeast of Sana. The Imaun has a stud of very fine horses; they come from the desert of Jóf, to the north of Sana, are larger than the celebrated "Nejdi" breed, and are not considered inferior to them in symmetry and speed. The imports are chiefly piece goods, Persian tobacco, and dates, from

*This statement is derived from the January number of the United Service Journal, in which it is also stated that the American trade in cotton goods is rapidly superseding the English in the ports of Muscat, Yemen, and the Arabian and Persian gulfs.

Tchámeb, and a great quantity of cotton-twist for weaving ; glass is in great request. Sana is within three days journey of Mareb, the ancient capital of Hadramant, the residence of the famous Queen of Sheba, whose name, according to the Arabians, was Balkis.

Coffee is indigenous to Arabia ; olives, sugar canes, medicinal and odoriferous plants, gum trees, bananas, cotton, indigo, dates, and various fruits, thrive on good soils. Djourah, a coarse grain, is chiefly used for food. It also produces coral, ambergris, precious stones, &c. The breeding of horses, camels, horned cattle, and sheep, is the chief occupation of the Arabs. In those parts of the country where the surface is naturally a desert plain, the inhabitants have possessed, from the remotest times, the art of forming flourishing oases, in which to establish their hamlets and towns—an operation they effect with great labor and skill. The greater part of the face of the country being destitute of running streams on the surface, the Arabs have sought in elevated places for springs or fountains beneath it. A channel from this fountain head is then, with a very slight descent, bored in the direction in which it is to be conveyed, leaving apertures at regular distances to afford light and air to those who are sent to keep it clean. In this manner water is frequently conducted from a distance of six or eight miles, and an unlimited supply is thus obtained. Those channels are usually about four feet broad, and two deep, and contain a clear and rapid stream. Most of the large towns have four or five of these rivulets running into them. The isolated spots to which water is thus conveyed possess a soil so fertile, that nearly every grain, fruit, or vegetable common to India, Arabia, or Persia, is produced almost spontaneously. This information is derived from recent European travellers in Arabia, who report that these oases, and the towns situated in them, date from various periods—some of those already discovered being evidently of considerable antiquity. These descriptions particularly relate to the southern provinces of Arabia.

PERSIA.

To Persia my circulars and communications have been addressed, on various occasions, to his excellency Hajee Meerza Abul Hassan Khan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mohammed Schah, at Tehran. Accounts received from that capital in March last, state that the Schah had become so infirm from the gout as to be unable to attend in person to state affairs, and had voluntarily abdicated in favor of one of his sons, a youth of 16, the Meerza remaining Minister of Foreign Affairs. This minister was some years since special Persian envoy at London and Paris, where he attained a tolerable proficiency in the English and French languages ; and a professorship for instruction in French and the sciences and literature of Europe has been established by the Schah, under his direction, at Tehran, where Persian youths destined for public employments are now required to be educated.

The foreign trade of Bushire, on the Persian gulf, is principally with British India, by which Persia is supplied with European manufactures, the products of China and the Indian Archipelago. Among the imports are cotton and woollen goods, lead, &c., a considerable proportion of the cotton goods being of American manufacture. The exports are chiefly dates, dried fruits, pearls, precious stones, Cashmere shawls, carpets, raw

silk, wool, gall nuts, yellow dye berries, otto of roses and various drugs, tobacco, wine of Shiraz, and horses. The population of Persia is estimated at 11,300,000.

Mohamera, a Persian town, standing on the boundary between Persia and Turkey, on the river Karún, about 15 miles from its outlet into the Persian gulf, is favorably situated for the emporium of an extensive commerce with India, Arabia, and Africa. This river, traversing the fertile province of Khozistan, was carefully surveyed by Lieut. Selby, R. N., in 1842, and found to be navigable for steamers of light draught as high as Shuster, about 120 miles from its mouth. This town, from its advantageous position, communicating by a double natural channel with the Persian gulf, and by the Shat-el-Arab with Bussorah, Korna, Hillah, and Bagdad, and all the countries watered by the Karún, Euphrates, and Tigris; the salubrity of its climate, and the well known energy, activity, and enterprise of its merchants and inhabitants, is destined, in the opinion of Lieut. Selby, to become one of the most important commercial marts on the gulf.

The whole trade of exports and imports of the various ports of the gulf is estimated at about \$10,000,000 annually.

The trade of Persia with Russia is through the ports of Asterabad, Bal-froosh, and Euzellee, on the Caspian sea; with Turkey, by Bussorah, on the Euphrates, and the port of Trebizonde, on the Black sea; and with Bokhara and Affghanistan by caravans.

The port of Gambroon, island of Kishm, and the Bahrein islands, on the Persian gulf, are subject to the Imaum of Muscat. Gambroon is a place of considerable foreign commerce and trade with the interior of Persia. The Bahreins are celebrated for their pearl fishery, which is very productive, yielding pearls to the estimated value of one and a half millions to two millions of dollars annually.

Bussorah, a city of Asiatic Turkey, on the right bank of the Euphrates, about 70 miles from its mouth, is the principal port on the Persian gulf, and the great emporium of the Ottoman empire for the productions of Asia. It has considerable trade with the ports of the gulf, British India, Arabia, and Muscat, and by caravans with Aleppo and Bagdad. Among its imports are European and American cotton and woollen goods, which are in increasing demand.

A treaty of commerce between England and Persia was signed at Teheran on the 28th October, 1841, by which the English are entitled to the same privileges with the most favored European nations in their commercial intercourse with Persia; and British consuls are permitted to reside at Teheran, Tabriz, and Bushire. The French government has also renewed its diplomatic and commercial intercourse with Persia, and has now a minister resident at that court.

An English mercantile house was established at Bushire in 1845, for the sale of European goods, by wholesale, at that port, with branches at Shiraz, Ispahan, Bagdad, Bussorah, Bahrein, and Muscat. They intend to do business on a large scale, and have a steamer employed on the river Tigris to carry their goods to and from Bagdad, and will ship to England the products of those countries.

BURMAH.

The kingdom of Burmah proper is now composed of only 8 provinces, viz: Ava, Pegu, Mrelap Shan, Cassay, Yo-Pyee, part of Martaban, Pong,

and Kyens, with their subject tribes. Its length from north to south is 710 miles, and greatest breadth from east to west 370 miles. Amara-poor, on the river Irawaddy, is the present capital, about 460 miles from the sea. Population of the kingdom about 6,000,000.

In 1844 I had highly interesting advices from Burmah that Tharawaddy, the king, had framed and put up a number of my circulars in his palace at Amarapoor, and was desirous of procuring one or more steamers from this city, through my agency, and of making a treaty with the United States. By later accounts I learn that he had become insane, been deposed by his subjects, and one of his legitimate sons, a minor, proclaimed king, under the regency of Prince Mekkara, uncle to Tharawaddy. This prince possesses liberal and enlightened views, united with great benevolence of character; is member of the Royal Asiatic Society, Calcutta; distinguished for his talents and literary attainments, being reputed the best Burman scholar in the kingdom; and in 1843, upon my recommendation, was elected a corresponding member of the National Institute.

Rangoon and Bassien are the principal Burmese ports, situated on different branches of the Irawaddy. Rangoon is about 26 miles from the sea, accessible to vessels of any burden. Its imports of British and American manufactures are considerable, including cotton goods, woollens, glass ware, &c.; and among its exports are gold, silver, rubies, sapphires, emeralds, noble serpentine, catechu, stic lac, elephants' teeth, orpiment, bees-wax, teak wood, &c. The principal foreign vessels that visit the port are English, American, and Chinese. It has a very active and extensive commerce with British India, Nicobar islands, and the Persian and Arabian gulfs, and an extensive trade with China, at the frontier town of Bhamo. The climate is temperate, agreeable, and salubrious. Bassien is rarely frequented by foreign vessels.

The Burmese have a treaty with the Chinese, with whom they maintain friendly intercourse by occasional embassies, bearing valuable presents. The last embassy sent by the king of Burmah to Peking accompanied the Chinese envoys who arrived at Ava in April, 1833. It was seven months in performing the journey, the distance between Ava and Peking being about 2,000 miles. In his autograph letter to the emperor, the king of Burmah styled himself "The lord of the Tshaddan elephant, the master of many white elephants, the owner of mines of gold, silver, rubies, amber, and noble serpentine, who bears the title and designation of '*The illustrious lord of life, who exercises boundless dominion and possesses supreme wisdom, the exalted king of righteousness and king of kings*;' the royal supporter of religion, the sun-descended king, lord of life, and great king of righteousness, who governs the great kingdoms and countries, and a multitude of umbrella-wearing chiefs to the

* The words in italic are in the *Pali* language in the original. Besides the Burmese, there are several dialects spoken in the kingdom, exclusive of the *Pali* sacred language, which has a distinct written character. The Burman letters are formed of circles and segments of circles, derived from the *Pali* alphabet, but differing wholly from the *Devanagari*. The structure of the language is very simple. There is no inflexion of any part of speech. Relation, number, mode, and time, are all indicated by prefixing or affixing certain articles. The words follow each other in their natural order.

The Holy Scriptures have been translated into Burmese by our worthy countryman, Rev. A. Judson, American missionary in Burmah, and also into most of the dialects of that kingdom, principally under the direction and at the expense of the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions.

westward ; affectionately addresses his royal friend Taoukwang, king of U'dé, who governs the great kingdoms and countries and a multitude of umbrella-wearing chiefs to the eastward." &c. &c.

The provinces of Martaban, Tavoy, Yeh, Mergui, Arracan, Assam, and Tenasserim, with their islands and dependencies, were conquered by the English during the Burmese war, and annexed to their East India empire by the treaty of Yandabo, of the 24th February, 1826. The principal ports thereof are Maulmain, Arracan, Sendoway, Ramree, Martaban, Tavoy, Mergui, Amherst, and Nanning ; most of which are now frequented *by our vessels, for trade.*

The Nicobar group, which have been subject to Denmark since 1756, is composed of 11 islands, viz : Car Nicobar, Little Nicobar, Batty Malve, Showry, Teresa, Camorta, Tilling-Chong, Trincutte, Katchall, Noncowry, and Trice. The greater part of them are extremely fertile, abounding in ship timber, ebony, and coal, and many of the indigenous productions of the tropics. In November, 1845, the Danish corvette Galathea and steamer Ganges visited these islands, to explore and survey the group, and found a trading settlement at Car Nicobar.

COCHIN-CHINA.

The kingdom of Cochin-China is now composed of four provinces, viz : Tonquin, Upper Cochin-China, Lower Cochin-China, and Cambodia, and contains a population of 20,000,000, according to Mons. Hedde, who visited that country in 1844, as the agent of the French government.

My voluminous communications for the government of Cochin-China have been addressed, via Singapore, to his excellency the minister of foreign affairs, commerce, and navigation of his majesty the Emperor of Annam,* the official title of the appropriate functionary at Hué.

The late Emperor, Ming Ming, was a great despot and tyrant. He refused to give audience to our envoy, E. Roberts, esq., in 1833, and signalized the latter years of his reign by many acts of atrocious cruelty towards the native Christian converts, and expelled the Catholic missionaries from the country. He died 31st January, 1841, and was succeeded by his son, Thieufri, the reigning Emperor, a more liberal and enlightened sovereign, who received his investiture from the Emperor of China April 12, 1842, under the title of Yuen Fusuien. I have late advices that he had received with great favor the letter and presents sent to him last year by the governor general of British India, and which appear to have wrought a favorable change in his bearing towards foreigners. This has been in part owing to the events of the Chinese war, and the increased intercourse between Cochin-China and Singapore, where a number of Cochin-Chinese youths have been sent to be educated at the "Singapore Institution," for interpreters, navigators, and engineers in his service. He has a number of large ships, built after European models, and several steamers, commanded and worked by native officers, crews, and engineers, for naval defence, and trade with China, British India, and the Indian Archipelago. The exports are chiefly sugar, rice, teas, raw silk, spices, cinnamon, cardamums, dye woods, eagle wood, ebony, ivory, pearls, hides, rhinoceros horns, horns, gum lac, gold dust, and the precious metals.

* "An-nam, the country of the tranquil South."

Among the imports are coarse cottons, woollens, camlets, long ells, red, blue, and yellow; tin, opium, fire-arms, some India goods, cloves, nutmegs, pepper, black and blue silks, green velvets, glassware, hardware, &c.

The principal ports are Hué, the residence of the Emperor, Faifo, Turon, Saigun, Quinhon, Phuyen, Yithrang, Cancao, Padaran, and Panompin, on the great river Cambodia. Turon is the only port open to foreign trade, which is entirely monopolized by the Emperor. It is rarely resorted to by foreign vessels for trade, on account of his arbitrary practices, and because there are no fixed regulations for its management. The imports from Cochin-China, at Singapore, in 1845, amounted to about \$240,000; and the exports thence to that country about \$283,000.

The people of Annam have adopted the Chinese characters, without making a syllabary or alphabet to express their own vernacular. The inhabitants of the country are evidently of the same race as the Chinese, and now acknowledge a nominal subjection to the emperor of China by sending a triennial embassy to Pekin—partly commercial and partly tributary. The sounds given to the Chinese characters are, however, so unlike those given to them in China, that the two nations cannot converse with each other. The Annamese have many sounds in their spoken language which no Chinese can enunciate. The court dialect is learned by educated men, and books are written and printed in Chinese. The sounds given to the characters are all monosyllabic, and slight analogies can be traced running through the variations; but they offer very little assistance to any one who, knowing only one mode of pronunciation, wishes to learn the other.

INDIAN ARCHIPELAGO.

Borneo, Celebes, the Sooloo group, Papua, and the other independent islands of the Indian Archipelago, offer an immense field for the profitable extension of American trade and commerce in those seas, where I would take leave to recommend it to be one of the objects of the proposed mission to select some suitable island or port as a mart for American trade—a resort for American traders and whalers, and naval station for our ships of war in the eastern seas. The Arru group, inhabited by independent native tribes, situated in the vicinity of Papua, and about 250 miles from the north coast of Australia, are represented to be in a tolerable state of cultivation, and, from their favorable position and many local advantages, would seem to be peculiarly eligible for such mart and station; and it is presumed there would be no difficulty in obtaining the desired permission by amicable negotiation with the native chiefs.

THE ARRU GROUP.

This group is composed of the islands of Wokam, Warkey, Wallada, Wamma, and Trana. Dobbo, in the island of Wamma, is the principal mart for trade. The chief productions of the islands are tripang, (of which 20 different merchantable sorts are found there,) tortoise shell, edible birds' nests, pearls, and mother-of-pearl. The pearl fishery is at the island of Warkey. The natives raise vegetables, stock, &c., and cultivate cotton. The islands abound in the finest ship timber, and produce the sago palm, which is the principal food of the natives. A considerable number of the Chinese established there are engaged in building

prahus, the natives being good ship carpenters. Among the articles which are in great demand by the islanders are coarse blue, red, and black calicoes, red baftas, samanap sarongs, axes, parangs, chopping-knives, brass wire, coarse Chinese crockery, arrack, anise-seed, gongs, elephants' tusks, small red beads, &c.

At this group may be found the valuable products of the east coast of Papua, Ceram, Goram, Booroo, Ceram-Laut, and the other numerous and fertile islands of the Banda and Arafura seas of the Archipelago, consisting, among other articles, of pepper, cloves, mace, and nutmegs, ship timber of the best kind, cabinet and scented woods, ebony, horns, hides, tortoise-shell, sharks' fins, edible birds' nests, gold dust, benzoin, camphor, betel, wax, cotton, wool, tripang, bird of paradise and Argus pheasant feathers, cowries, pearls, pearl shells, ambergris, and the products of the whale fishery. Trading vessels from the British East India possessions, the Dutch, from Java, Buji prahus from Celebes, and Chinese junks, together with a considerable number of American vessels, annually resort thither to procure such products in exchange for the manufactures of the United States, Europe, and continental India—chiefly for the China market. The trade is known to be highly profitable, and of increasing importance.

Description of some of the principal islands of the Banda and Arafura seas.

TIMOR.

The governor of the Portuguese possessions on the north coast of Timor resides at Diely, and pays himself and the other officials out of the revenues derived from trade, which is entirely engrossed by them, no other individual being permitted to engage in commerce. Their principal factories are Batu Gede to the west, and Manatatu to the east of Diely. The Dutch settlements are situated on the west and southwest sides of the island; the town of Coepang being the seat of the residency. The natives occupy the rest of the island, and carry on trade with the Bujis.

TIMOR-LAUT.

This island is about 70 miles in length by 25 in breadth, and about 190 miles from Port Essington. The principal products are tortoise shell, beeswax, tripang, stock, yams, Indian corn, &c., in great abundance. There is an extensive island on the north part of Timor-Laut, with an excellent anchorage in 8 to 10 fathoms water throughout the year.

Olihet, on the southeast side of Timor-Laut, affords a good anchorage during the southwest monsoons. The village is built on a hill 413 feet above the level of the sea, and is quite populous. Luora is another village, built upon the same plan as Olihet. From Luora the east coast is high, about 600 to 800 feet, thickly wooded, and with a number of bays.

SERAWATTY ISLANDS.

These are a group of fertile and inhabited islands situated opposite the north coast of Timor. The principal islands are Wetta, with the small port of Sau; Kissa, the chief village Marna; Letta, the chief village Batta Meau; Moa, chief villages Roksali, Taynama, and Patti; Nusi

Medta; Damma, which has a small fresh water river, with a good anchorage at the mouth, and the village of Kaayn; Laykor, principal village Mowai; Luan, which has four villages. These islands are annually visited by traders from Celebes, Amboyna, and Banda, to purchase tortoise shell and tripang, which are of the best quality, and afford a great source of riches to the natives. The trade is conducted by barter, and European cloths and cottons, which are in great demand by the natives, yield enormous profits.

The islands lying between the Serawatty group and Banda are Ser-matta, Teon, and Nela; the first two are subject to Damma.

ISLAND OF BABA.

The island of Baba, lying between Banda and the Arru group, has one principal village, Tepa, and is surrounded by several smaller islets; the most important of which are Witang to the east, and Dain to the west. They produce fowls, hogs, fruits, and vegetables, and are annually visited by these traders.

TENEMBER ISLANDS.

These consist of Vordate, Larrat, Maling, and Serra; they are represented to be extremely fertile, under tolerable cultivation, and are annually visited by the Dutch and Buji traders. The chief products are cattle, tripang, and tortoise-shell. The villages of Sabcano, in the island of Vordate, and Warrata, in the island of Serra, are the usual places of resort of those traders.

CERAM-LAUT.

This island is encompassed by several islets. Kilwari is the principal port and village. The commerce of these islands, which is monopolized by the rajah, is with Bali, an island adjacent to Java, and with the Buji traders to Singapore. It embraces various products of Papua, and the commerce of the entire chain of islands extending from Ceram to Papua. The quantity of these diversified and rich products obtained by them in that traffic is said to be incredible, and yield enormous profits. They also procure ebony, and a variety of cabinet woods of the finest quality, and the celebrated cajiput oil, from Cajili bay, in the island of Booroo. They are occasionally visited by whaling ships.

GORAM ISLANDS.

These islands are three in number, separated by a narrow channel from Ceram-Laut, and are distinguished by the natives by the names of Goram, Manovolk, and Salawatta. The first possesses the greatest population and the most extensive commerce. The villages are mostly erected on the seacoast, on spots near which the coral reefs afford good shelter for their vessels. The islands are rather high, and extremely fertile. The natives keep up a constant communication, in their own craft, with the adjacent islands and Papua, from which they obtain most of their articles of export and exchange in their traffic with the Buji traders.

KI ISLANDS.

The principal islands of this group, which are situated about sixty miles from the Arrus, are called Great Ki, Little Ki, and Ki Wattela. Dula, a village situated on a bay on the west side of Little Ki, is the chief resort of traders from Celebes and Banda. The islands abound in the best kind of ship timber; the people employ much of their time in building vessels, remarkable for their strength, superior and cheap construction, and durability, and are in great demand in the islands of the Archipelago. Ki Ili is famous for its potteries; most of the adjacent islands deriving their supply from this and the neighboring villages. In their disposition the natives of the Ki islands are more mild and peaceable than their neighbors.

BORNEO.

The English and Dutch are making unceasing efforts to control and monopolize the trade with all the islands of the Archipelago. In Borneo the Dutch have long had establishments at Banjarmasin, Pontiana, Sambas, and Coti; and the English, after breaking up the haunts of the pirates in those seas, have lately obtained from the Sultan of Borneo proper the cession of the island of Labuan, one of the satellites of the northwest coast of Borneo, abounding in coal of an excellent quality, where they have established a trading mart and depot station for a monthly line of steamers between India and China, to touch at Singapore, commencing in January last. The island is 6 miles long, 4 wide, 20 from the mouth of Borneo river, 707 from Singapore, 1,009 from Hong-Kong. The harbor is safe, anchorage good, and it is found to be one of the most secure ports of refuge on that coast for vessels navigating the China seas. The Sultan has also granted permission to James Brooke, esq., an enterprising English gentleman of fortune, confidential agent of the British government in Borneo, to form a trading settlement at Sarawak, on the same coast, extending from Tanjong Datu to the entrance of the Samarahan river, to the eastward; about 60 miles on the coast, and 40 in the interior.

The principal products of the island of Borneo are gold dust and gold, diamonds, tin, copper, antimony, of which there are extensive mines at Sarawak; coal, ebony, ivory, aloes wood, and other woods of the finest description for ship building, and other purposes; canes, ratans, nutmegs, pepper, sago, beeswax, edible birds' nests, benzoin, camphor and camphor oil, rice, &c. The annual amount of gold dust and gold, obtained principally by the Chinese, is estimated at about \$5,000,000.

The mission sent last year by the governor general of Netherlands India for the exploration and survey of the island of Borneo has greatly increased the general knowledge of the geographical and political concerns of that magnificent island, and its natural productions and capabilities, and has shown the importance to the supreme government of Batavia of adopting a more comprehensive system of government, industry, and commerce, by which its resources may be further developed and increased.

The Netherlands council of India has, in consequence, under date of the 28th February last, ordained that all the separate residences and divisions under Dutch authority on the south and east coasts, and also on the west coast of Borneo, and all their dependencies, are thenceforth to be united under one general Netherlands government of Borneo and de-

pendencies, and Mr. A. L. Weddik is named governor, who is to fix his residence in some central place in the interior of the island; and all the Dutch residents and authorities thereof are placed under his orders.

The notification fixes the boundaries of the Dutch territory, and enumerates the islands and other dependencies included in the new government, and which appear to embrace more than half the island and its numerous satellites, with the exception of Borneo proper, Sarawak, Labuan, and their dependencies.

The alleged object of this resolution and appointment is for the more effectual suppression of piracy, the promotion of industry, commerce, and civilization, and the moral and religious improvement of the Dyaks, and other natives of the island. It shows the importance attached by the Dutch to Borneo, and their determination to oppose the further progress of the English at settlement therein.

By recent accounts from Singapore we learn that an English naval expedition had lately attacked and destroyed the forts and residence of the Sultan of Borneo proper, and pursued him far into the interior. He had previously put to death all the chiefs who had in any way favored the English. The same accounts also state that an expedition of 3,000 Dutch troops, under the command of Governor General M. Rochussen, had made a descent upon the island of Bali, took forcible possession thereof, and annexed it, as a dependency, to Java.

CELEBES.

Among the products of this large, populous, and fertile island are gold, gold dust, coffee, (estimated at about 80,000 piculs* annually,) tortoise shell, mother-of-pearl, sandal wood, wild nutmegs, ratans, beeswax, buffalo hides, tamarinds, birds of paradise, &c.

The Bujis of Waju are the most numerous of the native tribes of the island—an active and enterprising maritime race, wholly devoted to commerce, and carry on a considerable traffic with the principal islands of the Indian Archipelago and Singapore. They speak and write a different language from the other tribes of the island; have a considerable body of indigenous literature, which consists of tales and romances founded on their national legends and traditions; translations of Malayan and Javan romances; historical accounts of their transactions since the introduction of Mahomedanism; and works on law and religion from the Arabic, together with codes of civil and criminal law, referring to a state of government and society of a patriarchal character. They have a code of maritime law, and courts of civil, criminal, and admiralty jurisdiction—all administered by native judges. They are said to be possessed of a recondite and learned language parallel to the *Kawi* of Java, and the *Pali* of the Buddhists. The reigning rajah of Waju is Laputongei, prince of Laduka. In 1845, one hundred and twenty-seven Buji prahus, aggregating 5,076 tons, entered the port of Singapore, laden with the products of Celebes and various other islands of the Indian Archipelago.

SOOLOO GROUP.

This group is composed of a number of islands. Sooloo proper is 30 miles long by 12 wide, and contains a population of about 30,000. Soong

* A picul is 133½ lbs.

is the chief town and residence of the Sultan, with whom Commander Wilkes, of the United States navy, made a treaty on the 5th February, 1842, when he visited those islands with the United States exploring expedition.

The soil of the islands is extremely fertile, and the climate more healthy than is usual in intertropical latitudes. Sugar-cane, rice, cocoa, cotton, bread fruit, indigo, spices of all kinds, turtle-shell, and pearl shells, &c., are among their products. Fruits and vegetables, of a great variety, are abundant, and of a superior quality. Most of the islands are still covered with the primitive forests, of which the valuable teak wood forms a part.

The peculiar situation of those islands, and their contiguity to the Philippines, Celebes, Borneo, China, Cochín-China, and Singapore, would render their settlement by a European power of great value and importance, but for the inveterate piratical habits and known treachery of the natives, and their neighbors the Illanuns of Magindano. The settlement made by the English in 1773 on the island of Balambangan, at the north of Borneo, one of the most eligible locations for a commercial emporium in those seas, was found to be untenable, and shortly afterwards abandoned in consequence of the frequent incursions and depredations of those pirates. Another attempt at settlement was made thereon by the English in 1803, and again abandoned in 1804, for the like causes.

In 1844 the inhabitants of the island of Basilan, one of this group, lying adjacent to Mindano, voluntarily tendered their allegiance to the Spanish authorities of that island, and it is now a dependency of the Philippines. Since its annexation thereto, the present energetic captain general has sent a number of armed vessels from Manila, with a strong military force, for the effectual suppression of piracy in those seas.

The Malay language is the *lingua franca* of the Archipelago—the usual medium of intercourse between the natives of the different islands, as well as between the latter and every description of strangers. It has no alphabet, and, like the modern Peruvian, is written in the Arabic character; it is simple in its construction, soft as the Italian, and easily acquired.

European possessions and settlements in the Indian Archipelago.

SPAIN.—The Philippine islands and dependencies, the Marian islands, in the Pacific ocean. Population about 4,200,000.

HOLLAND.—Islands of Java and Madura, (Bali,) Palembang, Bencoolen, and Padang, in Sumatra: (in Borneo, their jurisdiction is extended over more than half the island, and a great number of its satellites, with the exception of Borneo proper, and the English settlements at Sarawak and Labuan, by the above-mentioned order of the Netherlands council, at Batavia, of the 28th February last:) the islands of Rhio and Banka; Macassar on the south end, and Manado on the northeast end of Celebes; Ternate, in the Moluccas; Amboyna and Banda, in the Spice islands; Bimah, on the north coast of Sumbhawa; and Coepang, on the south of Timor. Late accounts from the Hague intimate that the Dutch government contemplate adopting a more liberal commercial policy in their East

India possessions, and have already permitted free trade with the Spice islands.*

PORTUGAL.—A settlement at Diely, on the northwest coast of Timor.

GREAT BRITAIN.—The island and settlement of Singapore, a free port on the Malay peninsula, and Sarawak and Labuan, in Borneo.

The population of the whole Archipelago, exclusive of the Philippines, is estimated at upwards of 25,000,000.

Steam communication between Sydney and Singapore.

The English have completed their survey of Torres's straits, and marked out, with buoys, the channel, which they found sufficiently deep and perfectly safe for the largest ships, and have also erected beacons for the direction of vessels sailing through it, with the view of opening steam communication between Sydney and Singapore by that route, where severe gales of wind are not prevalent at any season. The steamers are to touch at Port Essington, a British settlement made a few years since on the Cobourg peninsula, northern coast of Australia, as a commercial emporium for the trade of the Indian Archipelago and their Austral-Asian colonies. It is about 2,160 miles from Sydney by the east coast. The harbor is large, perfectly safe, accessible at all seasons, and one of the finest in all the east. Depots for the steamers are to be made at Serawatty islands, at Macassar, and at the island of Billiton; the distance from Port Essington to Singapore being about 1,890 miles.

JAPAN.

With regard to Japan,† I have procured with great care and diligence, from official sources in Holland, personally, in 1839, from the journals and reports of the latest Dutch residents at Nangasaki and missions to Yedo, and from other reliable accounts and narratives, a variety of interesting facts and particulars, attesting the superior intelligence, refinement, and civilization of that remarkable people above all the surrounding Asiatic nations.

The empire of Japan comprises the large islands of Nippon, Kiu-siu, Sikokf, Iki, Isousima, and a great number of small islands, and its dependencies, called the government of Matsmai, embracing the islands of Jesso, Sighalien, and the Kurile islands of Kunachir, Iturup, and Urup, and the Loo-choo and Majicosima islands, dependencies of the province of Satzuma. The empire, including the island of Sighalien, is about 1,600 miles in length, averaging about 80 miles in breadth. The population, according to the latest authorities, is about 50,000,000, exclusive of its dependencies; and the annual revenues are estimated at about \$125,000,000.

Japan is a feudal empire, the Mikado residing at his dairi, or imperial residence, Miako, being the nominal proprietor as well as sovereign thereof; the Siogoon, his deputy vicegerent or generalissimo, holding his court

* By an order of the Governor General of Netherlands India, dated at Buitenzorg, Java, the 9th September last, the Dutch port of Macassar, in Celebes, is declared to be a free port, open to the commerce of all nations from the 1st January, 1847. From its excellent geographical position, good roadstead, and the commercial spirit of its inhabitants, Macassar appears to be destined to become a great central point of trade between the Netherlands India provinces and the vast number of populous and productive islands in the Indian Archipelago.

† *Je-puen*, "the country of the sun, or origin of the sun."

at his vice-regal residence, Yedo. The mere official routine of duties and ceremony, the rigid observance of prescribed etiquette, the receiving of homage or compliments and presents from those permitted and bound to offer both, on frequently recurring festival days, so entirely engross the time of the Siogoon as not to leave him leisure, if he were so disposed, to attend to the business of the government, which is considered wholly unworthy of engaging either his thoughts or those of his nominal sovereign—the Mikado.

The real executive power is exercised by a grand council of State, composed of five princes of the imperial blood and eight princes of the highest rank. The president of the council is styled “the governor of the empire;” all the other councillors, and every department of the administration, are subordinate to him. The council transacts the entire business of the government, decides upon every measure, appoints to all efficient offices, and corresponds with the local authorities. Each councillor has his own specific department; but all important measures must be discussed in full council, and adopted or rejected by the unanimous vote of all, including the president.

The empire is now divided into 604 distinct administrations, including great and small principalities, lordships, and imperial towns, under the government of princes of two grades—the *daimio*, “very much honored,” who hold their principalities directly from the Mikado; and the *saimio*, “much honored,” who hold theirs of the Siogoon. Both are nominally absolute in their respective departments, and govern with all the forms of actual sovereignty. The lordships and important towns are administered by governors, appointed by the grand council. To every government two governors are appointed—one of whom resides at Yedo, and the other at his post—relieving each other semi-annually, whilst their families remain as hostages at court. Each governor has under him two secretaries, and a number of imperial police officials or spies, of different grades, called *go-banyosi* and *banyosi*, to execute his orders. The whole administration of the government, in every department, from the Mikado to the lowest official, is regulated by the most complex and ubiquitous system of espionage, from which no rank or condition of official life whatsoever is exempt.

It is held to be the duty of every individual to remain through life in the class in which he was born, unless exalted by some peculiar and extraordinary circumstance. These classes are 8: class 1, reigning princes or governors; 2, nobility; 3, priests; 4, military; 5, civil officers, including the polite circles; 6, trades; 7, handicraftsmen; 8, laborers.

From the first two classes are selected the ministers, great officers of State, governors, &c.; and the first four classes constitute the higher orders, who enjoy the special and exclusive privilege of wearing two swords and the *hakama*, or petticoat trousers. Trades and traders hold a subordinate station in Japanese society. The laboring classes are inured to habits of industry and frugality; and indigence and pauperism are said to be almost unknown in that country.

The Japanese laws are very sanguinary, admitting of but little distinction between different degrees of guilt. They admit of no fines, because, in the opinion of their legislators, such pecuniary punishments would give an undue advantage to a rich over a poor criminal. Due pains are taken to make the laws known to all classes alike. The administration of

justice is represented to be extremely pure, making no distinction between high and low, rich and poor. The public tribunals are very solemn, diligent, and astute in their proceedings, and seldom fail to elicit the truth; but to effect this, when other means are wanting, they have recourse to torture, and punishment immediately follows upon conviction of the accused: from their verdict there is no appeal. If offences against the State are more certainly punished than against individuals, it is only because the officers of government would risk their own lives by neglecting to prosecute a State criminal, whilst the prosecution of personal offences rests with the party injured. It is highly creditable to the Japanese character that offences against property are of rare occurrence in that country.

No individual in the whole empire, from the sovereign Mikado to the meanest of his subjects, is above the law; all are alike bound and enthralled by it, and equally amenable to its penalties. Law and established custom, unvarying, known to all, and pressing upon all alike, are the real despots in Japan; but he who scrupulously complies with their requirements has no arbitrary power, no capricious tyranny, to apprehend.

The Japanese of the higher classes are very polite and ceremonious in their social and official intercourse and correspondence, which is regulated by a code of minute etiquette, forming an important branch of their education. They are also carefully instructed in the mystery of the *hara-kiri*, "happy despatch" or abdomen ripping, by which every well-bred Japanese, by their singular code of honor, is sometimes compelled to terminate his existence.

The present Siogoon, Téenpaou, is represented to be an able, energetic, and enlightened prince. The government take great interest in the progress of science and political movements in western nations, and maintain a board of competent linguists at Nangasaki, thoroughly versed in the principal European languages, to translate and publish, in their own Japanese encyclopedias and periodicals, all the latest discoveries in science and improvements in the arts, together with notices of important political events, which they derive from the Dutch journals, and through the Dutch residents at that port, for the information of their people. Among their translations of the most celebrated European writers on science are several of the works of La Place and La Lande.

The language is polysyllabic, with an alphabet of 48 letters—soft, euphonious, and the most polished and perfect of any of the languages of eastern Asia, and has no affinity with the Chinese, or any other Asiatic dialect, except the Korean. Their syllabary dates from the eighth century, and may be written in four different sets of characters. These are, the *katakana*, appropriated for the use of men; the *hirakana*, for the use of women; the *yematokana*, used only at the court of the Mikado, and so called from the province of Yamasiro, of which Miako is the capital; and the *manyokana*, the use of which is not explained. It is written in columns from the top to the bottom, like the Chinese, and begins from the right side. The ideographic characters of the Chinese language are, however, used by them in a certain class of their standard works, which they originally derived from the Chinese; hence a previous knowledge of that language is considered indispensable to a proficiency in Japanese literature. One of their encyclopedias consists of six hundred and thirty volumes. They possess, besides, numerous works on history, (Japanese and foreign,) geography, voyages and travels, sciences and arts, poetry, and polite literature; and the

president of the imperial academy at Yedo is reputed to be well versed in the higher branches of mathematics and astronomy. The imperial library at that capital is said to contain over 150,000 volumes.

Dr. Von Siebold, the latest authority, states that at the imperial residence, Miako, literature is most diligently and enthusiastically cultivated. The poets, historians, and philosophic moralists most universally admired by their countrymen are to be found amongst the male and female members of the *daïri*, of whose lives literature is both the business and the pleasure. He further states that, in their intercourse with the Dutch mission at Yedo, the princes, nobles, professional and literary men, were unwearied inquirers respecting the arts, sciences, manners, localities, and governments of India and western nations. The questions both of the court physician and imperial astronomer discovered a proficiency in their respective sciences which truly astonished him. The most acceptable present that can be offered to the nobility and literati is a new scientific publication.

Primary schools exist everywhere throughout the empire; in no country in Christendom are the elementary branches of education more generally taught; and it is rare to find an adult person, even in the humblest circumstances, who cannot read and write the *katakana* character, in which their elementary books are usually printed. Children of all classes are trained to habits of implicit obedience, by parental precept and affectionate remonstrance, which Japanese parents value as obviating the necessity of punishment.

Colleges, such as the Dutch compare to their own high schools, are said to exist in many of the great cities, but the most distinguished for the talents and erudition of their professors are the imperial academies of Yedo and Miako, of which their learned men are members.

Printing on blocks of wood was introduced into the country from China in the thirteenth century. They have made considerable proficiency in mathematics, astronomy, mechanics, trigonometry, and engineering; have canals, chiefly for irrigation, and a great variety of bridges; can measure the height of mountains by the barometer, and have constructed very accurate maps of the empire. The great map of Japan, published at Yedo in 1779, is represented by Titsingh as the most splendid monument erected beyond the limits of Europe to geographical science. It exhibits a prodigious number of names and situations, and, according to all appearance, is not less accurate than circumstantial.

A geographical work, entitled "*San-Kokf-Tsou-to-Rets*," or "Description of the Three Kingdoms," by Rensifée de Sendai, a distinguished Japanese geographer, was published at Yedo in 1786. It is illustrated with three large maps of the empire and its dependencies, and the kingdom of Corea, drawn from actual surveys by native hydrographers. It also contains a description of "*Mou-nin-Sima*," or "Islands without Men," now known as the Bonin islands. They were first accidentally discovered by the Japanese in 1675, where they founded a penal settlement, which was afterwards abandoned, and were re-discovered by Captain Coffin, in 1823. The group contains a considerable number of islands, which are all laid down on one of the maps, distant 100 *ri*, or about 320 miles, from Nippon, according to Rensifée. Several of the islands are fertile, possess safe harbors, and have been brought into a good state of cultivation by a small colony of English, Americans, and persons of other nations,

who have made settlements there within a few years past, for the purpose of trading with the Japanese, and furnishing refreshments and supplies to whalers. A French translation of this interesting work, by the erudite Klaproth, was published at Paris in 1832, in octavo, with a folio volume of maps.

Miako, in the island of Nippon, is the imperial capital of the Mikado, and said to contain about 600,000 inhabitants, exclusive of the *dairi*. It is a beautiful city, surrounded by the finest scenery and most fruitful soil, and considered the healthiest of any town in Japan: it is in fact esteemed the paradise of the empire, one of its claims to this praise resting on the acknowledged superior beauty of its women. It is likewise the centre of literature and science, independent of the *dairi*, containing a number of high schools, colleges, and the imperial academy; and most of the popular works published and read in Japan issue from its presses. The finest silk stuffs, flowered with gold and silver, the richest varnishes, the best painted paper, and the most skilful works in gold, silver, copper, and iron, are here manufactured. *Miako* is also the residence of the lord chief justice, who is invested with authority over all the inferior judges and ministers of justice of the empire.

Yedo lies in the form of a crescent, around a deep bay of the same name, on the eastern coast of the island of Nippon, at the mouth of one of its largest rivers. The entire circumference of the city is said to be over 50 miles, and its population is estimated at upwards of 2,000,000. It contains the residences of the princes and great lords, who are compelled to reside there half the year. None of their mansions are more than two stories high, and most of them only one story, of a simple style of architecture, and generally surrounded by wide enclosed courts and extensive gardens.

The palace or residence of the Siogoon is built of freestone, and is encompassed by a wall said to be 15 miles in circumference, including a wide interior area, occupied by the spacious mansions of the princes and other high ministers of his court. The palace contains a grand apartment, called "the hall of a hundred mats," brilliantly adorned by pillars of cedar, painted walls, and gilded ceilings. In this hall the presents brought by the Dutch missions for the imperial court are displayed; and it is here the envoy is admitted to a brief audience with the Siogoon and the grand dignitaries of the empire. After being compelled to make many degrading obeisances, to crawl on his hands and knees to a place shown him between the presents arranged in due order on one side, and the place where the Siogoon sits on the other, and then kneeling, he bows his forehead to the ground, and retires, crawling backwards, without being permitted to utter a single word. On some occasions the envoy and suite have been required to dance, sing, play on musical instruments, and practise buffoonery, for the amusement of the Siogoon and his court.

Yedo is the seat of various branches of industry, and the mart of an extensive trade with the whole empire. Across the river, in the centre of the city, stands the celebrated bridge called *nippon bas*, from which distances to all parts of the empire are measured. In a Japanese map of *Yedo* in the possession of Mr. S. Wells Williams, of this city, which I have been permitted to examine, every part of that vast metropolis is minutely delineated; the residences of the court, princes, and nobility are

distinctly indicated, each bearing the arms of its possessor. The city appears to be intersected by a great number of canals, all communicating with the river. This map is about six feet square.

Ohosaka.—The great mart for foreign goods brought by the Dutch ships and Chinese junks to Nangasaki, and from Corea, through the factory at Tsus-Sima, is Ohosaka, a large and populous city at the mouth of the river Yodogawa, island of Nippon, distinguished for the great wealth, mercantile enterprise, and manufacturing industry of its citizens. It is about 20 miles from Miako. There are upwards of 100 bridges across the river, and the canals leading from it. The citizens, in Kempfer's time, boasted of raising an army of 80,000 men within its limits. It is the seat of luxury and pleasure; and the amenity of the climate, the abundance and variety of its luxuries, with its numerous theatres and public amusements of every sort, contribute to render this city the favorite place of resort of the princes and nobility from all parts of the empire.

The Japanese are extremely fond of dramatic entertainments; and there are theatres, elegantly decorated and fitted up with private boxes and dressing-rooms, in several of the large towns; but the price of admission is so high, that none but the upper classes can afford to frequent them. It is the custom for a Japanese lady of rank, when she visits the theatre, to be attended by a train of female servants, bearing a variety of her richest dresses, and at the end of each act to retire to her dressing-room, and re-enter her box at the rising of the curtain, in a new dress.

In agriculture the Japanese are very diligent and successful. It is compulsory on every tenant to till and improve the land in his occupancy, under penalty of ejection and confiscation. The whole country is, in consequence, highly cultivated; producing rice, (esteemed the best in Asia,) wheat, rye, buckwheat, barley, beans, and esculents of all sorts, culinary vegetables, a great variety of fruits, and flowers of the most brilliant hues and exquisite fragrance. Sugar is made, from the sap of a tree like our maple. The mulberry is reared, solely for the silk-worm. The principal article of cultivation, next to rice, is the tea-plant; tea being the universal beverage of all classes, as in China. Their gardeners possess the skill of dwarfing and gigantifying trees and shrubs. The rivers, lakes, and seas abound in a great variety of fish, oysters, and shell-fish, which are the principal food of the lower classes. Whales are very abundant in those seas, and many of the natives are employed in the whale fishery.

The internal trade is very considerable. By land, merchandise is conveyed on pack-horses and oxen, over good roads, by which all the large islands are intersected; but the principal transportation is by water, in coasting vessels from 50 to 200 tons burden. The prince of Satzuma, island of Kiu-siu, has a number of vessels, some of them 100 to 200 tons, trading between his port of Kagósima and Napakiang, in the Loo-choo islands, the Majicosima group, and to different ports of the empire and its dependencies. At Sinagawa, the outport of Yedo, a thousand vessels are sometimes collected, some bearing taxes from different parts of the empire; others laden with produce, merchandise, or fish.

Their manufactures of silk are celebrated: their finest porcelain is equal to that of China; the coarser inferior, but substantial and durable. Of their fine lackered ware, we are assured no adequate idea can be conceived from the specimens seen in Europe or this country, as the best quality is not allowed to be exported. Their sword-blades are said to be the finest

in the world, bearing the fine edge of a razor, and capable of cutting through an iron nail. Their artificers in gold, silver, copper, and steel, have a high character. They manufacture telescopes, barometers, thermometers, watches, and clocks, of curious workmanship.

The shops and markets of the principal towns are well provided with every description of agricultural produce and manufacturing industry, and are crowded with people from the most distant parts of the empire. Accounts are published from time to time of the general state of trade and agriculture, and prices current for the chief articles of traffic at the trading marts of Yedo, Miako, Ohosaka, and Semoneski, in the island of Nippon; Sangar, Kokura, and Nangasaki, in Kiu-siu; Tosa, in Sikokf; and Matsmai, in Jesso; and a variety of regulations are in force to protect home industry.

A post for letters is established throughout the empire, which, though pedestrian, is said to be very expeditious, by relays of letter carriers running at full speed.

The circulating medium of Japan is gold, silver, and copper, but only the gold and large silver pieces can properly be called coin. They bear the mint stamp, and are of ascertained value; smaller silver pieces and all the copper pass by weight. Paper money is likewise current in some principalities, and bills of exchange are in use among the merchants.

The southern islands teem with many of the productions of the tropics, whilst the northern yield those of the temperate zones. The mountains abound in mineral wealth of every description, and the volcanic regions in sulphur.

Among the products of Japan may be enumerated diamonds and precious stones; gold, silver, copper, and iron, of which it has many productive mines; tin, lead, tutenague, sulphur, coal, saltpetre, salt, camphor, pearls, corals, ambergris, rice, tea, wrought silk, cotton, tobacco, lackered ware, porcelain, and earthenware. Their imports comprise cotton goods, linens, woollens, raw and wrought silk, glassware, hardware, quicksilver, antimony, zinc, cinnabar, amber, hides, skins and leather, sandal and sapan wood, dye woods, Malay camphor, ivory, alum, cloves, mace, pepper, sugar, coffee, seal skins, whale oil, &c. The exports are chiefly of copper, camphor, lackered ware, &c. American cottons carried to that market by the Chinese traders have yielded a good profit, and are in increasing demand in Japan and Corea.

The Loo chooans are intimately connected with the Japanese. The language is the same, with unimportant dialectical variations, and Chinese letters and literature are in like manner cultivated by both. They send tribute twice to Pekin in three years. Lackered ware, grass-cloth, sugar, and earthenware are exported to Kagósima, and a great assortment of metallic articles, cloths, provisions, and stationery taken in exchange. The country in the vicinity of Napakiang, and towards Shudi, the capital, is highly cultivated, and the people appear to be as well clothed, and possess as many of the comforts and elegancies of life, as their neighbors. The islands have recently been visited and explored by Admiral Cecile, commanding the French squadron in the Indian seas, and two French Catholic missionaries have been permitted to sojourn there.

Japan, with its dependencies, has been erected into an apostolic vicariat, under a titular bishop appointed by the Holy See, in September last.

In addition to the privileges of commercial intercourse with Yedo,

Nangasaki, Kagósima, Ohosaka, and the other principal ports, it would be very desirable for our government to obtain permission for the numerous American whale ships employed in the lucrative fishery off the coast of Japan to enter any of the ports and harbors of the empire for repairs or refreshments only, and for hospitality and succor in cases of stress of weather or shipwreck.

Religions of Japan.

Sintoo is the primitive religion of Japan, of which the Mikado is the spiritual head and sovereign pontiff.

The duties it enjoins on its votaries are—

1. Preservation of pure fire as the emblem of purity and instrument of purification.

2. Purity of soul, heart, and body; in the former, to be preserved by obedience to the dictates of reason and law; in the latter, by abstinence from whatever defiles.

3. Observance of festival days.

4. Pilgrimages. This is the grand act of *Sintoo* devotion, and there are in the empire 22 shrines commanding such homage. By far the most celebrated and frequented by the *Sintoo* votaries is the temple of *Isje*. The most approved and sanctifying mode of making the pilgrimage is on foot, and as a mendicant; the greater the hardship endured, the higher the merit of the pilgrim.

The numerous *Sintoo* festivals begin with a visit to the temple; sometimes to one specially appointed for the day. Upon approaching, the worshipper, in his dress of ceremony, performs his ablutions at a reservoir provided for the purpose; he then kneels in the verandah, opposite a grated window, through which he gazes at a mirror therein as the emblem of the soul's purity; then offers up his prayers, together with a sacrifice of rice, fruit, tea, sakee, or the like; and when he has concluded his orisons, depositing money in a box, he withdraws. The remainder of the day he spends as he pleases, except when appropriate pastimes belong to it. This is the common form of worship at the temples, which are not to be approached with a sorrowful spirit, lest sympathy should disturb the happiness of the gods. At home, prayer is similarly offered before the domestic oratory and garden shrine, and prayer precedes every meal.

The offerings and contributions deposited by the worshipper are destined for the support of the priests belonging to the temple. The *Sintoo* priests are called *Kaminusi*, or the landlords of the gods; and in conformity with their name, they reside in houses built within the precincts of their respective temples, where they receive strangers very hospitably. They marry, and their wives are the priestesses, to whom specific religious rites and duties are allotted, such as assisting at the religious ceremony of naming children in the temples, &c.

Although they believe in an infinity of superior and inferior gods, and in deified or canonized men, as mediatory spirits, yet it is averred by Meylan, one of the Dutch residents, that all the temples, shrines, and domestic chapels of this sect are dedicated solely to the one supreme God. The temples, indeed, possess images of the particular gods or spirits to whom they are specially dedicated, but they are not set up to be worshipped, and are only exhibited upon particular festivals. Dr. Von Sie-

bold states, "that the Sintoists have a vague notion of the soul's immortality; of one eternal state of future happiness and misery as the reward, respectively, of virtue or vice; of separate places whither the soul goes after death. Heavenly judges call each one to an account. To the good is allotted paradise, and they enter the realm of the gods; the wicked are condemned and thrust into hell."

Two other religions co-exist, and have long been tolerated in Japan. The first was originally introduced from Corea, A. D. 552, by the king of Pe-tsi in that kingdom, then a dependency of Japan, who sent to the Mikado a bronze image of Buddha, with flags, books, &c., accompanied with the following letter: "This doctrine is the best of any. It reveals what was a mystery and a riddle to Confucius. It promises us happiness and retribution immeasurable and boundless, and finally makes us an unsurpassable Buddhi. It is, to use a simile, a treasure containing all that is for our good; and this treasure contains a twofold value, because it so completely adapts itself to the nature of our soul. Pray or make vows according to the disposition of your mind, and you will want for nothing. The doctrine came to us from farther India. The king of Pe-tsi imparts it to the realm of the Mikado, in order that it may be there diffused, and that which is written in the book of Buddha be fulfilled—"My doctrine shall spread towards the east."

This new religion at first met with opposition from the followers of the established creed, but it finally prevailed, and became the second religion of the empire; it is said to be divided into a high and pure mystic creed for the learned, and gross idolatry for the vulgar.

The third Japanese religion is called *Siutoo*, or the "way of the philosophers;" a system of morals which may be accommodated to almost any faith, true or false. It consists merely of the moral precepts taught by Confucius, and of some mystic notion touching the human soul, totally unconnected with any mythology or any religious rites.

The Japanese, at the time of their first intercourse with Europeans, in 1543, were a brave, enterprising, and mercantile people, engaged in an active and lucrative commerce with sixteen different eastern nations; had founded a colony on the west coast of Formosa, and sent forth bands of military adventurers to serve in the armies of various Oriental sovereigns; and were even found in considerable numbers as far as Acapulco. They were regarded by the Spanish and Dutch colonial officers as their best recruits.

The Portuguese, who were the first discoverers, brought with them a variety of new and admired articles of traffic; met with a hearty welcome, and were freely permitted to trade and settle in the country. For nearly a century afterwards they carried on a very lucrative commerce, in which the Spaniards, English, and Dutch were allowed to participate. Jesuits and Spanish friars followed in the train of the first settlers, and were permitted to build chapels, and preach to the people; and were very successful in making converts. Internal discords arose; foreign merchants became jealous, and strove to supplant each other. The Catholic missionaries were accused of forming designs for the subversion of the government, and were proscribed. The English abandoned the country in 1623; the Spaniards were expelled in 1625, and the Portuguese in 1637. The Dutch, as a reward for their services in the expulsion of their European

rivals, have ever since been permitted to retain their factory at Dezima, as a dependency of Java, and carry on their trade under the most rigid restrictions; and are compelled to send an expensive mission to Yedo every four years, with costly presents for the court.

From their first intercourse with Europeans, commerce had always been regarded with favor by the Japanese, and the princes and governors held out every inducement to the foreign merchants to come to their ports for trade; which, for a lengthened period, was mutually beneficial, and yielded them enormous profits. It was their respect for the superior scientific knowledge of the early Jesuit missionaries, a desire to profit by their instruction, and to attract foreign trade to the empire, which induced the higher classes to favor and protect them; and until Catholicism fell into disfavor, the government seems never to have prohibited any importation except of priests. Kempfer states that for several years prior to the expulsion of Europeans from the empire, the annual export of gold amounted, according to the Dutch reckoning, to 300 tons; and of silver, 2,350 chests.

Sir Stamford Raffles, when acting governor of Java, in 1813, sent three commissioners (of whom Dr. Ainslie was one) to Nangasaki, to obtain information respecting Japan. They returned with the impression that the Japanese were entirely free from any prejudices that would stand in the way of an unrestricted intercourse with Europeans. Even their religious prejudices appeared to the commissioners moderate and inoffensive. Commerce with that empire, both in export and import, was, in their opinion, extensible to a long list of articles not yet exchanged, and capable of great increase.

The articles required and in use in Japan were stated by Dr. Ainslie to be: *Woollens* of every description; they are partial to primary colors; (there are no sheep raised in Japan.) *Hardware*, likely to be very extensive. *Glass*; fond of cut-glass of every description; window and plate-glass in demand. *Carpeting* of different descriptions. *Printed cottons* of fine texture and brightest patterns. *Ironmongery*, including tools of every description, iron chests, &c.; *tin plates*, *lead*, *stoves*, *door-locks*, and *porcelain* of handsome patterns. *Fire-arms*, *clocks*, *watches*, and *fire engines*; *stationery*, *leather* of light colors, *lace*, *mock jewelry*, &c.

Dr. Ainslie was particularly struck with the intelligence, refinement, and polished manners of the ladies of the higher classes, to whom he had an opportunity of being presented during his sojourn in that country, and who, in his opinion, would grace any court in Europe.

The position of woman in Japan seems to constitute a sort of intermediate link between their European and Asiatic conditions. Their minds are as highly cultivated as those of the men, and many of their most esteemed authors are females. They are subjected to no jealous seclusion, hold a fair station in society, and share in all the innocent recreations of their fathers and husbands.

In a despatch to Lord Minto, in 1814, Governor Raffles states, "that the character of the Japanese, it was evident, had been subject to the misrepresentations which the jealousy of the Dutch had industriously spread over the whole of their eastern possessions. They appeared to the commissioners to be a race remarkable for frankness of manner and disposition, for intelligence, inquiry, and freedom from prejudice. They are in an advanced state of civilization, in a climate where European manufac-

tures are almost a necessary comfort, and where long use has accustomed many of them to its luxuries." He points out the advantages to be derived by both parties from opening commercial intercourse with that country, especially to the English, and which would probably have been effected under his auspices, but for the retrocession of Java to Holland, in 1814.

In another despatch he states, "that the Dutch factory at Dezima was a sink of the most disgraceful corruption and speculation that ever existed. The resident, to obtain his own ends, submits to every possible degradation, and the government at Batavia knows only just as much of what is going on in Japan as it is his interest to tell them; and to mask his speculations, the accounts of the factory are uniformly found to be involved in mystery and obscurity."

The Dutch have always found their trade with Japan to be very profitable; and in order to secure the exclusive monopoly thereof to their factory, it has been their uniform policy to oppose and frustrate all attempts of other nations to open intercourse with that country. The people evince an increasing desire for more enlarged intercourse with foreigners, and the government has gradually relaxed its arbitrary and rigid restrictions on their trade and intercourse with the Dutch and Chinese since the opium war with China, and the opening of the privileged ports of the latter, by treaty stipulations with Great Britain, France, and the United States. It is a well authenticated fact that the supreme government, a few years since, consulted the chief of the Dutch factory upon the possibility of sending young Japanese to Holland to be instructed in ship-building.

In 1830, the Prince of Satsuma made an arrangement with one of the members of the Dutch factory to deliver him an assorted cargo at one of the outports of his principality; but it was frustrated by the authorities at Batavia, from an apprehension that it would have compromised their servants at Nangasaki, as well as have affected the profits of their shipments to Dezima that year.

The Dutch trade with Japan is at present limited to two ships, despatched from Batavia annually, about the month of June. With China the trade is carried on regularly between Chapú and Nangasaki, except during the winter months; and within a few years past, is said to have increased from 12 to 70 junks annually, subject to the same rigid restrictions as the Dutch. The trade with Corea is conducted between the maritime town of Fun Chan, in Corea, and the factory at Fun Fung, in the island of Tsus-Sima, under the exclusive control of the Japanese prince thereof.

The English and Russians have at various times attempted to open trade with Japan, but without success.

In 1811, Captain Golownin, of the Russian navy, while engaged in exploring the southern Kurile islands, was captured and imprisoned by the Japanese authorities there, in retaliation for a hostile attack made a few years previously by an armed party of Russians on the bay of Arima, island of Sigahien, detained in captivity upwards of two years, and until the Japanese government received assurances from the Emperor of Russia that such hostile incursion had been wholly unauthorized by his imperial majesty's government. Captain Golownin's account of his captivity, in two volumes, is an interesting work, and contains much valuable information respecting Japan.

In 1837, the American ship Morrison, Captain David Ingersoll, owned by

an American firm in Canton, was despatched thence to Yedo on a mission of humanity and benevolence, to return seven shipwrecked Japanese mariners to their native country. She was *unarmed*, and one of her beneficent and enterprising owners, Mr. C. W. King, together with Mrs. King, Rev. Dr. Parker, Rev. Mr. Gutzlaff, and Mr. S. Wells Williams, went in her as passengers. On arriving at the entrance of the bay of Yedo they were fired upon by the forts on both shores, and compelled to leave. They afterwards put into the port of Kagósima, where they met with the same hostile reception, and returned to Canton without accomplishing the object of their voyage.

Since the unsuccessful mission of the *Morrison*, I have reason to believe that the Japanese government has been put in possession of information respecting this country, which has wrought a favorable change in its bearing towards our countrymen.

The American armed whale ship *Manhattan*, of Sag Harbor, Mercator Cooper, master, visited the port of Yedo 17th April, 1845, for the purpose of returning to their country twenty-two destitute Japanese sailors, whom he had rescued from a wreck and a desolate island. They were very kindly and hospitably received, and the ship liberally supplied with refreshments, provisions, and spars, in the name of the supreme government, free of charge.

An interesting account of this visit first appeared in "The Friend," of Honolulu, 2d February last, prepared from Captain Cooper's narrative, by Dr. C. F. Winslow, of Oahu; and some further particulars of the transaction were recently published by Captain C. himself, in the "Sag Harbor Corrector," of the 21st instant, since his return from a three years voyage in that ship. Dr. Winslow, in his letter accompanying the account, states that he had previously known Captain Cooper, having first met him at the island of St. Paul, in the Indian ocean, and made an ascent and examination with him of that wonderful extinct volcano; that he is a sober, thoughtful man, a close and interested observer, and may be wholly relied upon for truthfulness. From these narratives I have condensed the following account of Captain Cooper's interesting visit to Yedo, omitting the previous occurrences until the arrival of the *Manhattan* at the entrance of the bay of Yedo:

"As he sailed along the passage, a barge met him coming from the city, in command of a person who, from his rich dress, appeared to be an officer of rank and consequence. This personage informed him that his messengers had arrived at court, and that the emperor had granted him permission to come up to Yedo with his ship. He was, however, directed to anchor under a certain headland for the night, and the next morning was towed up to his anchorage within a furlong of the city, where he was immediately surrounded by a triple barrier of guard boats; but neither himself nor any of his crew were permitted to go on shore.

"The ship was visited by a great number, of all ranks; from the governor of Yedo, and the high officers attached to the person of the emperor, arrayed in golden and gorgeous tunics, to the lowest menials of the government. All were filled with insatiable curiosity to see the strangers, and inspect the thousand novelties presented to their view. They brought draughtsmen on board, who were very particular in taking drawings of the ship, spars, &c., and their dimensions, and every thing else that interested them on board.

"The Manhattan was at anchor in the harbor of Yedo four days, during which time the captain was supplied, by command of the emperor, with wood, water, rice, rye in grain, vegetables of various kinds, and some crockery, composed of the lackered ware of the country. He was recruited with every thing of which he stood in need, and all remuneration was refused. But he was told explicitly never to come again to Yedo, for, if he did, he would greatly displease the emperor. During these four days he had many conversations, through the government interpreter, with the governor of Yedo, and other persons of rank. In one of them he was informed by the governor that the only reason why he was allowed to remain in the waters of Japan was, because the emperor felt assured that he could not be a bad-hearted foreigner, by his having come so far out of the way to bring poor persons to their native country who were wholly strangers to him. He was told that the emperor thought well of his heart, and had consequently commanded all his officers to treat him with marked attention, and to supply all his wants. The day before he left, the emperor sent him his autograph, as the most notable token of his own respect and consideration.

"The captain dealt kindly with all, obtained their confidence, and assured them he had no inclination to transgress their laws, but only desired to make known to the emperor and great officers of Japan the kind feelings of himself and the people of this country towards them and their countrymen. The Japanese seamen, who had been taken from the desolate island and the wreck, when parting from their preserver, manifested the warmest affection and gratitude for his kindness. They clung to him, and shed many tears. This scene, the reports of the shipwrecked men of the many kindnesses they had received, and the uniformly prudent and amicable deportment of the American captain, made a very favorable impression on the governor of Yedo. During his stay this great dignitary treated him with the most distinguished civility and kindness.

"The governor of Yedo is represented to be a grave and elderly looking man, somewhat gray, with a remarkably intelligent and benignant countenance, and of very mild and prepossessing manners. He appeared interested with the captain's account of the people and civilization of this country, and the latter spared no pains to leave a good impression of the American name and character, especially as a commercial people, on the minds of those high officers whose position might carry them into audience with the emperor.

"Captain Cooper represents the climate and appearance of the country to be pleasant and lovely in the extreme. Wherever he inspected the coast, the whole earth teemed with the most luxuriant verdure. Every acre of hill and dale appeared in the highest state of cultivation. Where the eminences were too steep for the agricultural genius of the inhabitants, they were formed into terraces, so that, for miles together, they presented the appearance of hanging gardens. Numerous white-looking dwellings studded the whole country. Some of them were so charmingly situated on sloping hillsides, and sequestered amidst foliage of a fresh and lively green, that the delighted mariners almost sighed to transplant their homes there—the spots were so sunny, so inviting, and so peaceful.

"The whole appearance of the landscape indicated a dense and industrious population. Around the capital the same signs of culture were

exhibited as in the country farther north. The city itself was so filled with trees and foliage that not houses enough could be distinguished from the ship to indicate with certainty that a city existed, or to allow the circuit of it to be defined. The buildings were white and rather low, and no towers or steeples were seen peering above the other edifices.

"The harbor of Yedo presented a maritime population as numerous and industrious as that which appeared to exist on the land. Vessels of all sorts and sizes, from mere shallops to immense junks, were under sail or at anchor wherever the eye turned on the bay. Yedo seemed to be the mart of a prodigious coastwise commerce, and the whole sea was alive with the bustle and activity pertaining to it.

"The Japanese, from Captain Cooper's observations, are rather a short race of men, square built and solid, and do not possess Mongolian features to the extent exhibited in the Chinese. They are of a light olive complexion; are intelligent, polite, and educated.

"The dresses of the common people were wide trousers and a loose garment of blue cotton. Dignitaries and persons of consequence were clothed in rich silks, profusely embroidered with gold, and silken thread of various colors, according to their rank. Some of these personages were so splendidly attired as to excite great admiration in the foreign visitors. No woollen fabric composed any part of their dress; but of this material they seemed particularly curious, and examined it with great attention. It seemed a great novelty, and all the small pieces they could obtain were solicited and taken on shore as objects of curiosity.

"Among the articles taken from the wreck by its officers were some books and a chart of the principal islands composing the empire of Japan. This chart is perhaps one of the most interesting illustrations of Japanese civilization which has come into our possession. It embraces the island of Nippon, all the islands south of it, and a small part of Jesso, on the north. It is four feet long, and nearly as broad, and the islands are projected on an uncommonly large scale. The minutest indentation in the coast, with all the trading ports, large and small, are laid down apparently after accurate surveys. Captain Cooper found the coast which he followed to be correctly delineated, by astronomical observations; and his own charts of Nippon were altogether erroneous. The tracks of the coastwise trade are traced throughout the whole group, from Jesso to Nangasaki. But the most interesting part of this map is the topography of the interior of the islands. They are laid out in districts, and all variously colored, like the States in our republic in Mitchell's map. The smallest villages are denoted and named. The residence of the governor in each district, and other public establishments, occupying less ground, are also delineated. They are all embraced in enclosures of different shape and coloring; and from the uniformity of these in appearance and number in every district, we may suppose the administration of the government of Japan is conducted with great system. The rivers, even their smallest tributaries, are all traced to their source. The number and extent of these streams are surprising. No country of its size can be more abundantly watered than Nippon. The streams are so numerous that the whole interior has the appearance of being irrigated by countless canals. But they are evidently river channels, and can all be followed from their sources in the valleys to their junction with each other, and their termination in the sea. The public roads are exceedingly numerous, in-

tersecting the whole country from shore to shore, and indicating a vast amount of travel throughout the empire. In several parts high mountains are laid down, in dark coloring. These occur occasionally in small groups, and occupy but little space. The general appearance of the country is that of bold and lofty hills, alternating with great numbers of broad valleys. All pour forth rills and streams which fertilize the earth as they flow along, and afford a thousand advantages and encouragements to an industrious population, engaged, like the Japanese, in agricultural and commercial pursuits. The whole empire swarms with towns and hamlets. It is almost impossible to conceive its populousness without an inspection of the map.

"On one side of the sheet is a large amount of Japanese writing, explanatory of the figures, characters, roads, &c., delineated in the different districts on the map.

"Among the books taken from the wreck was a small one, in form like a note-book, filled with figures of various and eccentric forms, and pictures of spears and battle-axes of strange and anomalous patterns. Under each were characters, probably explanatory of the objects attached to them. Both figures and characters were neatly and beautifully executed, and they presented the appearance of having been issued from a press of type or copperplate, like the plates of astronomical and other scientific works. This little book attracted Captain Cooper's attention, and excited his curiosity to such a degree that, after noticing some similar figures embroidered in gold on the tunics of the high officers, he ventured to inquire their explanation. He then learned that it was a kind of illustration of the heraldry of the empire—a record of the armorial ensigns of the different ranks of officers and the nobility existing in the country.

"These figures were wrought always on the back of the officer's tunic, and the weapon which appertained to his rank corresponded with the one drawn under the ensign in the book alluded to. Each grade of officers commanded a body of men whose weapons were of a particular and given shape, and those weapons were used by no others under an officer of different grade, or wearing a different badge on his tunic.

"The day Captain Cooper left the country, the court interpreter gave him an open letter, without signature, written in the Dutch language, with a bold and skilful hand. The document informs the world that the bearer of it has furnished assistance to Japanese sailors in distress, and had brought them to their native land; and this being made known to the emperor by the mouths of the shipwrecked mariners, he had ordered that although this was contrary to the Japanese laws, by which the Dutch and Chinese were alone permitted to bring in such persons, yet they have been received in this instance because the bearer was presumed to be ignorant of the law, but that in future they will not be received under any pretext whatever, and whenever they do come they shall be treated severely, which must be made known to all concerned; that the ship having been long at sea, was short of wood and water, of which she had received a supply; was not permitted to remain any longer, and was required to leave with speed, and return to her own country.

"Having laid at anchor four days, and replenished his stores of wood, water, &c., he signified his readiness to depart; but the winds were adverse, and it was not possible for him to get to sea. There seemed to be no disposition manifested by the government to force him away; but at

the command of the governor of Yedo, the anchor was weighed, and he was towed 30 miles out to sea by near 400 boats, 4 abreast, when the Japanese took a courteous leave of him. He continued on his voyage to Kamtschatka, and the northwest coast, and arrived at Sag Harbor a few weeks since."

Although it may be presumed that our government is already in possession of all accessible information respecting the countries above named, and aware of the advantages to be derived from opening and extending our commercial relations therewith, still I considered it would be rendering an acceptable service to the country to solicit the early attention of the President to the subject.

With that view, I had the honor of addressing President Polk a letter, under date of the 31st January last, containing a variety of information respecting the countries above mentioned, and now herewith amplified and extended by the latest accounts from the East, and took the liberty therein of submitting to him the expediency of sending a commissioner, with plenipontentiary powers, similar to the mission of the late Edmund Roberts, esq., to Siam and Muscat, and of the Hon. Caleb Cushing to China, in a national vessel, to open intercourse and make commercial treaties with the independent sovereigns, sultans, and rajahs of the maritime nations and islands of the eastern hemisphere above mentioned, with which the United States may not hitherto have made any treaties.

The mission to consist of a commissioner or envoy, with a chief secretary of legation, to be fully empowered to act as envoy in the event of the death or other impediment of the commissioner; a limited number of attachées, as linguists, draughtsmen, &c.; a skilful physician, who ought to be a good naturalist and botanist, with a suitable collection of American seeds, &c. for distribution and exchange, and to make collections of minerals, seeds, plants, &c. of the countries to be visited; to be provided with appropriate presents and specimens of our American products, manufactures, and industry, to be selected for the mission, as best adapted for the wants or trade of those respective nations.

The presents for the Mikado and Siogoon of Japan to embrace a collection of the best maps and geographical and statistical works on the United States, and the agriculture, manufactures, and industrial pursuits of our country; and also on medicine, surgery, mathematics, astronomy, navigation, engineering, chemistry, the physical sciences, &c., all American editions, together with a complete apparatus of the American telegraph, small models of a ship, steamboat, &c.

The mission to proceed successively to the several eastern countries and islands above mentioned, and also to Corea, touching in its progress at some of the principal intermediate ports frequented by our merchant vessels, and generally to protect American interests in those remote seas and countries, and open new markets for our trade and commerce. The commissioner to use due diligence and despatch, and conduct the respective negotiations with as little parade and ostentation as may be required for the successful accomplishment thereof.

In anticipation of the proposed mission, I would also take leave respectfully to suggest the policy of our government immediately sending out instructions to our consuls in China and Manilla to take charge of such shipwrecked Japanese as may be brought into any of the ports within the jurisdiction of their respective consulates, and maintain them at the charge

of the United States, until they can be put on board a United States ship bearing an American mission to Japan, and by whom they would be delivered to the government at Yedo on the arrival of the commissioner at that court.

Mr. S. Wells Williams, at present of this city, has resided about twelve years in China, where he acquired a practical knowledge of the Chinese language, and learned to speak and write Japanese, under the instruction of natives of Japan in Macao. Mr. Williams possesses a small library of Japanese books, and has recently completed a fount of types of the *katakana* character; he has also prepared founts of Chinese and Manchu type, for printing in those languages. From my personal knowledge of this gentleman, and his peculiar qualifications and attainments, I can confidently recommend him as the most suitable person to be appointed interpreter to any American mission to Japan, Corea, or Cochin-China.*

A memorial of the presidents of marine insurance companies, merchants, bankers, shipbuilders, steam-engine manufacturers, mechanics, &c., of this city, in favor of the proposed mission, was presented by the honorable Mr. Dix, in the Senate of the United States, on the 1st June last, and referred to its Committee on Foreign Relations, who have the subject under consideration.

COREA.

The peninsula of Corea, on the eastern coast of Asia, forms a kingdom, composed of 8 provinces, divided into 41 principalities, according to Renssée, and tributary to China and Japan. It is separated from the latter by the straits of Corea, and is about 650 miles in length by 250 in breadth. Population estimated at about 15,000,000. Kin-ki-tao, the capital and royal residence, is situated near the large river Han Kiang, and is a populous city. The name of the present king of Corea is Lisiang.

An active trade is carried on between Corea and Japan, through the port of Fun-Fung, in the Japanese island of Tsus-Sima and the maritime town of Fun Chang, in the southern province of Kin Chang, on the opposite coast of Corea. The trade is under the exclusive control of the prince of that island, who has warehouses for its accommodation at each place.

In industry the Coreans do not appear to be inferior to the Chinese and Japanese. They excel in the manufacture of cotton cloth and cotton paper, of which great quantities are sent to Pekin. They also manufacture silk goods, plain and embroidered mats, and have attained considerable skill in working iron. The country produces gold, silver, iron, rice, grain, cotton, silk, ginseng, tobacco, hemp, furs, skins, swine, horned cattle, and small horses, prized for their speed. Their trade with China is conducted by land through the frontier town of Hoong-Tchoong, situated at a short distance from the sea, at the mouth of the Meekee-ang, which separates Corea from Manchuria, and Foong-Pee-en-Men, on the southern frontier. It is principally in the hands of a few privileged Mandarins,

* Mr. Williams will shortly publish a new work on the Chinese empire, which will contain an account of its political divisions, including Manchuria, Mongolia, Hi, and Thibet; their geographical and topographical features; the natural history of China, its government, laws, literature, language, science, industry and arts, social and domestic life, history and chronology, religion, Christian missions, intercourse with other nations, and a full account of the late war with England.

and is carried on at an annual fair at Kee-en-wen, the nearest town in Corea, four leagues distant from Hoong-Tchoong. One of the principal articles of trade is the *hay-chay*, a marine plant taken in the sea of Japan, and of which there is a great consumption in China. The Coreans also carry on a considerable traffic with the Manchus at the above towns. They are bound to send tribute quarterly to Peking. The tribute-bearers are Mandarins, who avail of these occasions to speculate and trade on their own account, as they are exempt from the payment of any duties.

Manchuria produces pulse, Indian corn, millet, barley, buckwheat, drugs, cattle, skins, and furs. The climate of this country is so inhospitable as to prove a serious obstacle in the way of its settlement and cultivation; the inhabitants subsist principally by fishing and hunting.

With Japan the trade consists of an interchange of a variety of productions of both countries, and of those brought by the Dutch and Chinese to Nangasaki, among which are European woollens, American cotton goods, &c. The largest rivers are in the northern part of the country. The Yalukiang has 12 mouths, and is said to be navigable for junks 35 miles, and for barges about 180 miles. There are numerous groups of islands off the coast of Corea, and it possesses many fine bays and harbors. The largest of the islands is Dudparts, lying off the southern coast: it is 60 miles in circuit, fertile and populous, well wooded and watered, with the advantage of a good harbor. The possession of this island by any European power would enable it to command the commerce of Corea and Japan. On the eastern coast, whales are said to be numerous.

The Coreans have adopted the Chinese character, but without many of the elaborate modifications in use among the Japanese. They have invented an alphabet, the letters of which combine to form syllables, and these syllabic compounds are then used, like the Japanese characters, to express their own words. The original letters consist of fifteen consonants and eleven vowels. The sounds and meanings of Chinese characters are expressed in this syllabary in the duoglot works prepared by the Coreans for learning Chinese; while it is used by itself in works intended for the natives. The Coreans have not, like the Japanese, unnecessarily increased the difficulty of their own language by employing a great number of signs for the same sound, but are content with one series. The Japanese have the inflections of cases, moods, tenses, and voices, in their language; but these features are denoted in Corean by the collocation of the words, and the words themselves remain unchanged, as in Chinese. The sounds of the Corean are pleasant, and both it and the Japanese allow many alterations and elisions for the sake of euphony.

The upper classes of the Coreans are highly educated, and they have a rich indigenous literature of their own. The capital, Kin-ki-tas, is said to possess a large library. In manners and civilization they rather resemble the Chinese. They are of the Mongol race, but taller and stouter than the Japanese. The prevalent religion is Buddhism.

"The Institution for the Propagation of Faith," at Lyons, France, has a number of missionaries at Corea, under the charge of an apostolic vicar for that kingdom. By late accounts it appears the minds of the people are well disposed towards the Christian religion, and they had been successful in making many converts. The literary class hold it in the highest estimation, and seem only to be waiting for the moment when they will be free to declare in its favor.

The scientific expedition sent by the emperor of Russia last year, under the direction of Professor Von Middendorf, for the exploration of the northern and eastern parts of Siberia, has traversed the whole of that country, from east to west, and from south to north, even to the extreme northern headland of Taimyr. Undaunted by the severe privations he had undergone in obtaining his knowledge of the far northern lands of Siberia, the Professor next undertook the no less arduous task of traversing the whole of that vast continent to the Shantar isles, at its southeastern extremity, in the sea of Okotsk, and thence to return to Nestchinsk, along the Chinese frontier, a region never previously explored by a man of science. From Udskoi he traversed the sea of Okotsk to Netka, on the great Shantar island. On his return journey he examined the frontier line of China, a track never explored even by a Cossack, and ascertained that between the Udskoi of the Russians and the mouth of the Amur, or Sighalien, there is a considerable tract, quite independent of both Russia and China, and occupied by a people called Guilaïques, who pay no tribute to either emperor.

KURILE ISLANDS.

These are a chain of small islands connecting the peninsula of Kamtschatka with the Japanese island of Jesso; they are dependant on Russia, except Kunachir, Urup, and Iturup, which belong to Japan. They extend about 700 miles, are thinly inhabited, and abound in fur animals. The natives, who are not numerous, subsist by hunting, fishing, and the whale fishery, and dispose of their furs, oil, spermaceti, and whalebone to the Russian Americans, Japanese, and Dutch.

THE ALEUTIAN ISLANDS.

These islands are also dependencies of Russia, and extend from Kamtschatka to Cape Alaska, on this continent; are about 600 miles in length, mostly barren, unproductive, and thinly peopled. The natives subsist by fishing and catching sea otters and fur animals, the trade in which is monopolized by the factories of the Russian Fur Company established in these islands.

According to the latest authorities, the aggregate population of the several countries above described, with which the United States have never made treaties, exceeds 133,000,000. With the greater portion of them our trade is at present conducted under many disadvantages, subject to arbitrary charges and exactions, and with Japan and Corea entirely prohibited.

In this enlightened era of social progress and free trade, the antiquated feudal systems of *mare clausum* and commercial non-intercourse will no longer be tolerated by the nations of Christendom. Exclusive China has been compelled to yield to the spirit of the age, and her vassal, tributary, and neighboring nations must succumb to it. Maritime expeditions for exploration, geographical surveys, or colonization; and missions for the advancement of science and opening trade and intercourse with all the nations and islands of Asia, Africa, Oceanica, and Polynesia, are now in progress by the English, French, Dutch, Danes, Russians, and Prussians, from which the most beneficial results may be anticipated.

All which is respectfully submitted.

The United States territorial possessions of Oregon and California, now being rapidly settled by enterprising American freemen, are destined to give this magnificent and mighty republic the commercial and maritime supremacy in the Pacific, and their ports will at no distant day become the marts of commerce with all those nations and islands.

In view of this auspicious posture of our national affairs and eastern relations, it is eminently the policy of our government, by the mission above proposed, to open commercial intercourse and friendly intercommunication with all the eastern nations; to make our flag known and respected, and give protection to our lawful commerce in every trading mart "from the orient to the setting sun."

I take leave to submit herewith, for your consideration, a consular plan for the countries above mentioned, with a suggestion for the appointment of additional consuls or vice-consuls in Australia and New Zealand.

Awaiting your commands, I have the honor to be, with great respect, sir, your most obedient servant,

AARON H. PALMER.

HON. JAMES BUCHANAN,

Secretary of State, Washington.

PROPOSED CONSULAR PLAN FOR THE COUNTRIES NAMED IN THE FOREGOING LETTER, INCLUDING THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS AND SIAM.

Comoro islands.—Consular agent to reside at Johanna, subject to the consul at Zanzibar, whose jurisdiction should embrace all the ports on the southeast coast of Africa and west coast of Madagascar.

Aden.—Consul, with vice-consuls or commercial agents at the principal ports on the gulf of Aden, the Red sea, and Arabia, excepting Oman.

Persian gulf.—Consul at Bushire; vice-consul at Bussorah; commercial agents at Gambroon and Bahrein.

Burmah.—Consul at Rangoon; vice-consuls or commercial agents at Maulmain and other principal ports of the Anglo-Burman provinces.

Cochin-China.—Consul at Hué or Turon.

Sumatra, Penang, Malacca, Rhio, Banca, and northwest coasts of Borneo, subject to the jurisdiction of the consulate at Singapore, with vice-consuls or commercial agents at some of the principal ports or trading settlements.

Java, Madura and adjacent islands, *Moluccas, Timor,* and the islands of the Floris, Banda, and Arafura seas of the Archipelago, including *Papua* and *Port Essington*, subject to the jurisdiction of the consulate at *Batavia*, with consular or commercial agents at some of the principal islands and trading settlements.

Celebes.—Consul to reside at Macassar, with commercial agents at some of the principal ports of that island, and the ports of the southeast coast of Borneo to be included within his consulate.

Philippine islands, including the *Loo-choo* and *Bonin islands, Majicossima group, Bashee islands, Sooloo group, Palawan,* and the other islands of the Sooloo seas, subject to the jurisdiction of the consulate at *Manilla*, with vice-consuls or commercial agents at some of the principal independent islands.

Siam.—Consul at Bankok.

In addition to their prescribed consular duties, the several consuls to be invested with diplomatic powers, and authorized, whenever it may be requisite, to communicate with the native or colonial governments of the countries embraced within their respective jurisdictions, through the proper department. It shall be one of their special duties to correspond regularly with the Department of State quarterly, or oftener; to embody in their communications all information that can in any way be useful to the United States, concerning the European colonies or countries of the native sovereigns or princes to which they are accredited, respecting the productions, agriculture, manufactures, arts, sciences, education, commerce, navigation, new laws or regulations affecting directly or remotely the interests of the United States, together with an account of any important public events that may transpire.

To give efficiency to the above plan, and to promote the extension of American commerce in those countries, I would further respectfully suggest that it be made the duty of the commissioner who may be sent on the proposed special mission, after the successful accomplishment thereof, to establish his residence at some central place in the East, whence he shall make periodical visits to the various consulates, vice-consulates, and commercial agencies, which may be appointed as above, and exercise a general supervision over the same, respectively, as the general superintendent of United States trade and commerce in the East and in China, coordinately with the United States commissioner accredited to that empire; and that he correspond quarterly with the Department of State on the various objects of his mission.

From the information I possess respecting the present state of affairs and progress of colonization in Australia and New Zealand, I conceive it would be important, in addition to the consuls already appointed for those colonies, to appoint vice-consuls or commercial agents at the following places:

Perth.—Western Australia, Swan River settlement. This port is much frequented by our whalers engaged in the whale fishery off that coast. In a late communication from the honorary secretary of the "Western Australian Agricultural Society," transmitting me a copy of the journal of their transactions, he states: "We are very desirous here to establish a system which we imagine would prove alike beneficial to you and to us—namely, to purchase the cargoes of your whalers, enabling them to carry home to you the proceeds of many voyages in one; or, in other words, to realize several cargoes in one voyage—the ship returning finally with a full cargo and the price of three or four more. We wish to be informed whether there exists any legal or politic objection on your part to such a scheme."

Melbourne.—Australia Felix, Port Philip settlement.

Adelaide.—South Australia.

NEW ZEALAND.

Auckland.—The seat of government.

Wellington.—On Cook's straits.

VAN DIEMAN'S LAND.

Launceston.—On Bass straits.

The above ports are much frequented by our whalers, and are becoming places of trade.

All which is respectfully submitted.

ADDENDA.

The river Joob has its source in the highlands of Abyssinia; it is navigable with boats three months in the year; the town of Soahel, at its mouth, is a place of considerable trade.

A number of the French consular agents in the ports of the Red sea are Christian Arabs, who are preferred to Europeans for the station, on account of their knowledge of the language of the country, its commerce, and productions.

Aden was at a remote period the emporium of commerce with India, Africa, the Arabian and Prussian gulfs, and, together with Mareb, Sana, Tchameh, and Hadramant, constituted the ancient kingdom of Sheba, of "the Sabeans men of stature," memorable for the visit made by its queen to Jerusalem, in the time of King Solomon, "with a very great train, with Camels that bare spices and very much gold and precious stones."

Arabia has always been celebrated for its valuable productions and early commercial intercourse with Tyre, thus commemorated by the Prophet Ezekiel, chap. 27, verses 21 to 24: "Arabia, and all the princes of Kedar, they occupied with thee in lambs, and rams, and goats: in these were they thy merchants. The merchants of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy merchants; they occupied in thy fairs with chief of all spices, and with all precious stones and gold. Haran, and Canneh, and Eden, (Aden) the merchants of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad, were thy merchants. These were thy merchants in all sorts of things, in blue clothes and brodered work, and in chests of rich apparel bound with cords, and made of cedar, among thy merchandise."

The Karún is the river "Ular" of the Prophet Daniel, (c. 8, v. 2;) his tomb exists on its banks at this day. Shuster occupies the site of Susa, which was in early times the capital of Susiana, and contained "the palace at Shushan," the residence of the ancient kings of Persia. The principal treasury of the empire was kept there, out of which Alexander paid the debts of his army, at the expense of twenty thousand talents, on the return of his expedition from India, under Nearchus, in February, B. C. 325.

Mr. Malcom, an American traveller in Burmah, states that "Burmah, in fertility, beauty, and grandeur of scenery, and the variety, value, and elegance of its natural productions, is equalled by few countries on earth. It is occupied by a people of great activity and acuteness, possessed of many qualities agreeable to strangers, and the Burmese are fully entitled to be called a civilized people. A regular government, a written language, an established literature, a settled abode, foreign commerce, respectable architecture, good roads and bridges, competent manufactures, adequate dress, gradations of rank, and the condition of the women, conspire to es-

tablish their claim to be so considered. In intellect, morals, manners, and several of the points just named, they are not surpassed by any nation of the East, and are certainly superior to any natives of that peninsula." Their written code, civil and criminal, is derived from the Institutes of Menu; but there exist great abuses, venality, and corruption in the administration of justice. Mr. Malcom estimates the population of the kingdom at 8,000,000, and Rangoon 50,000.

The port of Niathrang, in Cochin-China, was opened to foreign commerce in April last, under certain regulations and restrictions which are understood to be at variance with the customs of friendly and civilized nations.

The Buji trade at Singapore commences in September and ends in the middle of November; it is considered second only to the trade of that port with China.

The authentic history of the emperors of Japan commences B. C. 660. It is a jejune and uninteresting chronicle of the births, reigns, and deaths of the Mikados, interspersed with occasional brief notices of memorable events; and is chiefly remarkable for the great longevity and duration of the reigns of several of the early Mikados, as will be observed by the following list, extracted from Kempfer's History of that empire, which is acknowledged by the Japanese themselves to be the best history extant of their country.

- B. C. 476. Kosio, reigned 83 and lived 115 years.
- 392. Koan, his son and successor, reigned 101 and lived 137 years.
- 290. Koui, his eldest son and successor, reigned 76 and lived 128 years.
- 214. Kookin, his eldest son and successor, reigned 56 and lived 116 years.
- 157. Kaiwoko, his son and successor, reigned 59 and lived 111 years.
- 97. Sinnsin, his son and successor, reigned 48 and lived 119 years.
- 29. Synin, his third son and successor, reigned 98 and lived 139 years.
- A. D. 71. Kiskoo, his third son and successor, reigned 60 and lived 108 years.
- 270. Oosin, reigned 43 and lived 113 years.

The French took possession of Mayotta April 25, 1841.

